

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with the President of Russia

PARTICIPANTS: President Putin

Notetakers: Jared Thomas, Susan Brockhaus,
and Jon Rohmiller

DATE, TIME: July 6, 2006, 7:31-7:41 a.m. EDT

AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Hey Vladimir. How are you doing? (U)

President Putin: Good morning George. I am very happy to hear your voice. I will only take one second of your time. I have just met with leaders of the world's labor unions in the anticipation of the G-8 Summit and they reminded me that you have a birthday today. On a serious note, I would like to wish you a happy birthday. The truth is, that it was I who reminded them about your birthday and they asked me to forward to you their warmest congratulations. Although the U.S. labor union leader complained that the U.S. had very low wages. They all were complaining about the same thing. I had a very good and substantial discussion with Secretary Rice when she was here. Soon you and I will have an opportunity to have a substantial discussion in St. Petersburg. We are preparing for the meeting with you and in addition to all of the other items on the agenda, one more will be added, that is the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. And one last thing of a personal nature, tonight one of our national television channels is broadcasting a film about you and Laura. I've heard that it was a very good one. (U)

The President: I hope it wasn't done by Michael Moore. (U)

President Putin: Here we have films in the tradition of Russian Stanislavskiy. (U)

The President: Listen a couple of points. Condi briefed me on her meeting with you. I heard your messages loud and clear, and I think we will have a good G-8. I look forward to my private meeting with you. It will be a good change of course to renew

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our friendship and have a conversation about the world. Today, I'm told Susan Schwab is talking with Gref about the WTO. Progress is slow, but it's important that we're moving forward. We will see if we can't get it done before the G-8. (S)

President Putin: I hope so. (U)

The President: We hope so too. Look the North Korean wants people to pay attention to him. He basically gave an obscene gesture to the Chinese, America, and the other countries that asked him not to fire his rockets. (S)

President Putin: Yes, the Chinese are quite mad with him. (S)

The President: Here's my worry. My worry is that the world will come rushing to his side and say we don't want to irritate you so we will give you concessions. I think the message should be the opposite. We are tired of his bad behavior and want him to change. I thank you for your statements after the man fired not only one missile but seven. I think it is very important that the sentiment be extended by our governments, particularly at the U.N. It is important that the world see a good, sound resolution come out of the U.N. I hope the Chinese are angry, because I felt his actions were insulting to the Chinese. I hope they send him the a very tough message privately. The truth of the matter is that if we want to have a weapons-free Korean Peninsula, the Chinese will have to deal with North Korea in a firm way. I am worried that if nothing is done the Japanese may want to arm. (S)

President Putin: Yes. (U)

President Bush: So, it is very much in China's strategic interest to be involved, not as a messenger, but as a partner. I have sent that message to the Chinese, and to the extent you could have your people get involved, that would be very helpful as well. I still believe the Iran issue will dominate the G-8. It's important to continue to coordinate messages, not only between Russia and the U.S., but also between Russia, Europe, and Japan. We are focused on getting him to behave responsibly, but we should maintain close coordination so that Iran doesn't think our focus has turned to North Korea. Anyway thanks for your phone call, I'll see you in a week or so in St. Petersburg. I am looking forward to it. (S)

President Putin: I embrace you. All the best. I am very happy to hear you once again. Bye. (U)

The President: It was great hearing you. Good-bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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